

Baird Announces Funding for Southwest Washington Projects (June 19, 2009)

Washington, D.C.

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"This funding will improve public safety and as a result, help increase the quality of life throughout Southwest Washington," said Congressman Baird.

"Additionally, this bill also makes a significant commitment to search for solutions to ocean acidification by directing millions to study the problem. From the people who work in the seafood and shellfish industry, to those who enjoy our maritime resources, the consequences of an increasingly acidic ocean to the people of Southwest Washington could be nothing short of catastrophic."

A recent study funded by NOAA and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), showed the scope of the problem facing North America's West Coast is far greater than scientists ever imagined. Alarmingly high levels of acidified water have been found within 20 miles of the shore, which could spell disaster for ecosystems from Mexico to Canada, and everywhere in between.

These increasingly acidic waters could be disastrous for the Southwest Washington economy. The region produces almost a quarter of the oysters consumed in the United States, and the shellfish industry supports thousands of jobs in Southwest Washington. The industry is the second largest employer in Pacific County, with annual gross sales of almost \$32 million.

Below are the projects that received funding in H.R. 2847:

- Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Program (\$12 Million)

- This program established by legislation passed by Congressman Baird (H.R. 4174) directs government science agencies to study the causes of, and solutions to ocean acidification. The bill allocates \$6 million to the National Science Foundation (NSF), and \$6 million to the National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

- Washington State Meth Initiative (\$1.5 million)

- The Washington Meth Initiative is vital to Washington's fight against meth.

With federal support, Washington

has been able to hire more police officers, and take down many meth labs. As a result, the state has become a national example of how to fight the meth problem. The Initiative brings together law enforcement, prosecutors, and treatment professionals from across the state to work in concert to address all aspects of the meth epidemic.

- New Records Management Systems for Law Enforcement (\$500,000)

- Lacey: \$300,000

- Funding would go towards a new records management system (RMS) so that multiple law enforcement agencies in Thurston County are able to perform better crime analysis, deploy personnel in a more effective manner, share information more effectively and better fight crime. With a new RMS, law enforcement agencies will be able use crime mapping to pinpoint areas where patterns of crimes are occurring and to more effectively deploy their limited resources.

- Vancouver: \$200,000

- The new RMS will integrate the currently incompatible law enforcement and justice data systems, thereby enhancing functions like crime mapping, evidence and property, and licensing and permits. Connectivity and data sharing between various city and county departments will reduce staff time and enhance customer service. The Vancouver Police Department currently depends on Clark County's regional computerized police RMS which provides police reporting capability and police records access. First purchased in 1996, the current RMS is so outdated that programmers cannot make updates to the system and the vendor no longer supports the software.

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